

and I myself and many others I know do not own oil stocks, nor do we receive extraordinarily generous campaign contributions which the Republicans and the President do from the oil industry.

So our reaction is not a collective yawn, and there is nothing that can be done about it, and it is just market forces. Ours is to say let us stop the price gouging of American consumers.

Experts say that about 30 percent of this is pure speculation, that is, self-trading, oil being traded off the books purely to enrich the companies and traders.

Another very significant portion comes from the fact that the oil companies, not the environmentalists, oh, the darn environmentalists, they have just been closing refineries left and right. Well, no. Actually, there has not been a single refinery closed in America, although many have been closed in the last 10 years, by environmental restrictions or litigation. They have been closed for economic purposes.

There was a memo 10 years ago from the American Petroleum Institute that said, hey, guys, wake up, you are not making enough money on refining; if you could shrink down refinery capacity, you would have an excuse to drive up margins and the prices of refining. They have exceeded their expectations. In fact, refinery profits from the last year, 12 months, are up 60 percent, 60 percent.

If we return to the historic average margins for refinery, which were profitable but not wildly, unbelievably profitable, gas would go down by another 40 cents a gallon.

So you take out the speculation, you take out what they have done with the manipulation of refinery capacity and you are back down to \$2.30 cents or so a gallon. Now that is not a long-term energy policy, but that is relief for American consumers. That is relief for American business. That gives us the opportunity to begin to invest in a more oil-independent future.

The so-called energy bill that passed the House based on subsidies for the oil, coal and gas industry, you know, they are hurting, they need subsidies from the taxpayers. We need to borrow money to give to them or give them price breaks for their production on Federal lands and not realize those revenues to the Federal Treasury, if that excuse for a so-called energy bill would actually have us more dependent on Middle East oil 10 years from today than we are now.

That is an energy policy? Look at the Middle East. Do we want to be dependent upon the Middle East? Do we want to be filling the coffers of Iran and Saudi Arabia and other OPEC countries? I do not think so.

We need a plan for energy independence in America. We need a plan that is going to develop new technologies here at home that we will market to the rest of the world, that will make Americans energy independent. Somehow

Brazil was able to do it, but they tell us it is just not possible here in the United States of America, we cannot figure out a way to get to energy independence like Brazil.

Now, I do not believe that. The President knows the American people are a little upset. So in his State of the Union he talked about how we need to do more about alternative fuels and alternative technologies. Unfortunately, the money did not follow the mouth. If John Fitzgerald Kennedy had applied that same amount of money to his mission to the Moon, we still would not be in the outer atmosphere of the Earth, let alone the Moon.

There is no real commitment there because real commitment would mean that you are starting to threaten the wildly profitable oil industry.

BP announced today, and they are supposed to be the weakest of the announcements this week, that their profits were up a mere 40 percent over the quarter for last year. ExxonMobil is likely to announce either the largest quarterly profit in history for any corporation on the face of the Earth this week on Thursday or maybe only the second largest. They made \$100 million a day profit last year. They gave their CEO a \$400 million retirement package. They are not investing in new capacity. They are not investing in alternative fuels. They do not care about energy independence for the United States of America. They like the addiction that they have got us on now.

We need an energy policy and we need it soon, and the Republican Party is in thrall with the oil companies.

□ 1830

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES of North Carolina addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

BORDER CORRUPTION

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, I request permission to take Mr. JONES's time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, there is more news from the second front. This is the border, and the news is not good. It is disturbing.

There is word tonight that some men and women charged with protecting our borders could be making their yearly salary in just a matter of days by taking bribes. That is right, bribes.

Border Patrol agents, our the first line of defense in the fight to secure America's borders, may have dirty money on their mind instead of illegals, all the while they are compromising national security for a fist full of dollars.

This month, two Border Patrol supervisors pleaded guilty after accepting \$200,000 in bribes and working with the illegals to come into the United States. These supervisors were working on a test program set up between the Border Patrol and the Mexican Government where human smugglers, coyotes as we call them, were arrested in the United States and were supposed to be deported back to Mexico for prosecution. This is the same program that these officials have been raving about. They even came to Washington and testified before Congress that 82 suspected smugglers were returned back to Mexico last year.

But what is worse is these supervisors used a government vehicle to bring two smugglers across the border. One bought his way out of jail for a \$10,000 bribe while another shelled out \$6,000 in bribes so he wouldn't be shipped back to Mexico. Then these two agents, new best friends of these two individuals, dropped them off at a Wal-Mart parking lot.

Their case isn't the only one that is under investigation. In fact, it is far from it. Other Border Patrol agents charged with upholding our laws and our sovereign borders are facing Federal charges and investigations. Border Patrol agent Oscar Ortiz was in fact not even a United States citizen, an illegal himself, and he used a false birth certificate to, get this, Mr. Speaker, become a U.S. border agent and work on our border. His lies were only discovered as he conspired to smuggle in over 100 different people into the United States.

Another example: two Border Patrol agents, brothers, have vanished into the darkness of Mexico because they were being investigated for smuggling drugs and illegal immigrants into the United States. Once they figured out that the Federal Bureau of Investigation was out to capture them, they took off and disappeared, as I said, into Mexico.

Two other agents were indicted for taking bribes and allowing illegals to cross our border for a few dollars.

Experts say targeting border agents is an easy task. You see, here is what happens. On the other side of the river, they watch our border agents with binoculars. They say coyotes look for weak inspectors and then they test them to see whether or not they are lawful.

The way they do it is they send someone across the border, someone like a woman, who will flirt with the agent until he lets her in and the people that are with her in. Once this occurs, then these individuals are approached by these coyotes to see if they will let more people in, all in the name of money.

Mr. Speaker, our national leaders are divided over what to do with immigration, what to do with the people that are here illegally; but the country cannot be divided over corruption on the border by border agents. Americans